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### 3.01 THE TWELVE SPIES

#### NUMBERS 13 & 14

God always takes care of His people. When His people, the Israelites, were slaves in Egypt they cried out for God's help. So, God sent Moses to rescue them. God did many powerful things to convince Egypt's King to let the people leave. Finally, Moses led the God's people out of Egypt and God promised to take them to a new land—the land of Canaan. There were lots of problems along the way. There was a lot of complaining by the people. There were times when they were disobedient to God. However, Moses kept going, doing what God asked him to do by leading the people to the new promise land.

When the people were close to Canaan land, God told Moses to send in twelve men—twelve spies—to look at the land God said He was giving them. God knew there would be other people there, people who did not believe in God and were sinful people. God would help the Israelites conquer the people of the land. This was the land He had promised to His people. When Moses sent the twelve spies, he told them to look at everything there. Moses said, "Look at the land. See if we can grow food. Bring back a sample of the food that grows there. Look at the people there. See if they are strong or weak. Tell us about the towns they live in."

The twelve spies were in Canaan for forty days. They saw everything. Two of the spies, named Joshua and Caleb, came back very excited. They brought back some good food. They said, "The people are strong, but we know God promised us this land. We can fight for it and win. Don't be afraid! God is with us."

But, the other ten spies were afraid. They said, "There are giant people there, too strong for us to conquer. We would be like bugs to them and they would kill us." These ten spies continued to tell scary stories about what they saw. They did not believe God could help them take the land. All the people believed these ten men. They began to moan, cry and complain about how Moses had taken them from Egypt. "Let's pick a new leader," they said. "Someone new can take us back to Egypt."

Moses met with his brother, Aaron, and the two spies who believed in God's power—Joshua and Caleb. They tried to convince the people not to be afraid. But the people got angry with them. They didn't believe them. The people began to talk about killing these godly men.

Then, the brightness of God's glory appeared to them all. God spoke to Moses. "How long will these people refuse to trust me? I've done so much for them. I think I will allow them to die and begin with a new people." Moses said to God, "Please forgive these people of their disobedience and wrongdoing. I know You still love them as You always have."

God told Moses that He would forgive the people. However, because they didn't believe Him, because they were afraid to go to the land He was giving them and because they didn't trust Him to help conquer the giants there, He would cause them to live and wander in the desert forty more years. The people living at that time would never be able to see the promised land of Canaan and only their children would enter the land to live. Yet, God allowed Joshua and Caleb to enter the land of Canaan because they trusted and believed Him.

When we Trust God and His Word, He Will Help Us.

### 3.01 THE TWELVE SPIES - TEACHER'S GUIDE

#### NUMBERS 13 & 14

##### HIGHLIGHTS:

- 1) God sent Moses to Egypt to rescue the Israelites, God's people. God had promised a new land for them to live in—the land of Canaan.
- 2) When the Israelites were close to Canaan, Moses sent twelve men—twelve spies—to have a look at the land and bring back a report of what they saw there.
- 3) The twelve spies spent forty days in Canaan. When they came back, two of the spies brought back good food. They said the people were strong there, but God would help the Israelites conquer the land.
- 4) The other ten spies were afraid. They said there were giants there. The people there would be too strong to conquer. They convinced the people to also be afraid.
- 5) God was angry with the people. He wanted to destroy them. Moses asked God to forgive them. God told Moses He would forgive them, but they would not be able to enter the promised land of Canaan. In addition, these people would have to wander in the desert for forty more years.

##### QUESTIONS:

- 1) What land did God promise His people, the Israelites?
- 2) How many men did Moses send in to have a look at the land of Canaan?
- 3) What did two of the spies say about Canaan?
- 4) What did the other ten spies say about Canaan?
- 5) What did the people want to do when they heard the reports from the spies?
- 6) What did God say would happen to the people who didn't trust Him?

##### ANSWERS:

- 1) God promised His people, the Israelites, the land of Canaan.
- 2) Moses sent in twelve men, as spies, to have a look at the land.
- 3) Two of the spies said God would help the Israelites conquer the land.
- 4) The other ten spies said the people there were too strong to conquer.
- 5) The people wanted to go back to Egypt.
- 6) God said the people would have to wander in the desert for forty more years. They would not be able to enter the promised land.

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